

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BRUSSE 09515 221800Z

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ACTION EB-03

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 EUR-08 CIAE-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00

DODE-00 INR-05 INRE-00 SSO-00 L-01 PRS-01 /038 W

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O P 221653Z OCT 75

FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

TO AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5246

C O N F I D E N T I A L BRUSSELS 09515

LIMDIS

FOR STYLES, CHAIRMAN OF USDEL FOR TALKS WITH ECAC

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAIR, BE

SUBJECT: CIVAIR: CHARTER TALKS WITH BELGIUM

REF: BRUSSELS 9464

1. VANDERPERREN WOULD LIKE TO BRIEF USDEL CHAIRMAN STYLES PRIVATELY SOME TIME FRIDAY ON THE DIFFICULT POSITION IN WHICH BELGIANS FIND THEMSELVES RE CHARTER MOU. HE PREFERS NOT TO CHANGE THE SCHEDULE FOR THE TALKS, BUT INTENDS TO FIND APPROPRIATE TIME--PERHAPS EVEN BEFORE SESSION IS CALLED TO ORDER IN THE MORNING--TO INVITE YOU TO TETE-A-TETE.

2. VANDERPERREN IS ALMOST CERTAIN THAT ECAC WILL NOT AGREE TO PERMIT CHARTER BILATERAL ARRANGEMENTS ALONG THE LINES OF PRESENT OR PROPOSED US-BELGIUM MOU. HE SAYS THE ECAC MOU OF JUNE 5 WAS DIRECTED AGAINST THAT PARTICULAR AGREEMENT. HE SAYS AIR FRANCE WAS BEHIND THE MOU, AND NEITHER THE FRENCH NOR THE OTHER LARGE ECAC MEMBERS ARE OF A MIND TO ALTER THEIR POSITION NOW. QUOTE THEY ARE JEALOUS UNQUOTE HE TOLD US.

3. VANDERPERREN THUS WANTS USDEL TO UNDERSTAND THAT THERE

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IS VERY SERIOUS PROBLEM TO OVERCOME BEFORE BELGIUM CAN

PROCEED TO AMENDMENT AND RENEWAL OF BILATERAL CHARTER MOU. HE SAYS THAT ON ONE HAND BELGIUM MUST HAVE QUID PRO QUO FOR RENEWING AN ARRANGEMENT WHICH HAS BEEN SO BENEFICIAL TO THE US CARRIERS, AS PER REFTEL PARA 3, BUT IN ADDITION HE ASKS USDEL TO CONSIDER WHAT MUST BE DONE IN ORDER TO ARRIVE AT NEW AGREEMENT WITHOUT PROVOKING AN OPEN BREAK BETWEEN BELGIUM AND ECAC (WHICH DE DOES NOT CONTEMPLATE). HE SUGGESTS THAT AN UNDERSTANDING MIGHT BE SOUGHT WHICH WOULD NOT BE FULLY REFLECTED IN TEXT OF NEW MOU. TO ACCOMPLISH THAT, HE SAYS QUOTE YOU MUST TRUST US UNQUOTE. WE TOLD HIM THAT THERE WOULD BE LIMIT TO HOW ACCOMMODATING WE COULD BE IN THIS DIRECTION, BUT THAT WE UNDERSTAND HIS PROBLEM AND WOULD TAKE AS CONSTRUCTIVE A POSITION AS WE COULD TO FACILITATE AGREEMENT ON TEXT THAT WOULD BOTH COVER ESSENTIALS AND SATISFY BELGIAN PRESENTATIONAL REQUIREMENTS.

4. COMMENT: OUR ASSESSMENT OF CHANCES FOR REACHING AGREEMENT WITH THE BELGIANS ON TEXT OF CHARTER MOU OCTOBER 24 DEPENDS LARGELY ON WHETHER VANDERPERREN HAS CORRECTLY SIZED UP LIKELY OUTCOME OF US-ECAC TALKS NOW IN PROGRESS. IF ECAC DOES NOT AGREE TO PERMIT BILATERALS ALONG LINES WE PROPOSE, THEN BELGIANS WILL NOT SIGN ON FRIDAY AS THINGS PRESENTLY STAND. IN OTHER WORDS, USG WOULD THEN HAVE TO COME UP WITH QUID PRO QUO IN SCHEDULED SERVICES, AND/OR MUCH MORE LIMITED BILATERAL MOU TEXT WITH INFORMAL UNDERSTANDING ON THOSE POINTS WHICH BELGIUM IS BARRED (BY ITS COMMITMENT TO ECAC) FROM GRANTING IN AN AGREEMENT OR ARRANGEMENT. FIRESTONE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: BRIEFING MATERIALS, NEGOTIATIONS, SUPPLEMENTAL AIRLINES, AVIATION AGREEMENTS, AMENDMENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 22 OCT 1975
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975BRUSSE09515
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750367-0063
From: BRUSSELS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19751030/aaaabale.tel
Line Count: 90
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EB
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: 75 BRUSSELS 9464
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 24 APR 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <24 APR 2003 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <28 APR 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CIVAIR: CHARTER TALKS WITH BELGIUM
TAGS: EAIR, BE, US
To: PARIS
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006